MONSTERS ARE GOOD FOR MY CHILDREN YOURS TOO!!!

A modern mother conveys an important message to all mothers --and dads!

Editor's Note: Occasionally, it is true, it has been suggested by a parent or adult that we are doing a Bad Thing in bringing Halloween to the teen & pre-teen population of the country 12 times a year with this and our companion filmonster magazine, MONSTER WORLD.

One local young fellow recenlty distressed me very much by calling me up and asking me how he could get his mother to accept his interest in mosters, telling me almost with tears in his voice that my magazines were his favorites but his mother didn't think they were good for him and they were forbidden in his house. "I would be glad to talk to your mother on the phone," I told the young man in trouble. "Maybe I could help change her mind." But she never called and I never got to tell her what I learned about 8 to 16 year old monster fans and their enthusiastic parents in big cities like Denver, Detroit, St. Louis, Chicago, New York, Philadelphia & Washington, D.C.; and in smaller cities like Niles, Montclair, Greeley, Harrisburg . . . and San Bernardino, where a parental Mayor presented me (a monster!) the Key to the City with a official ceremoney photographed by the local newspaper reporter! For in the Summer & Fall of 1963, I took an automobile tour across the United States and back, 5 weeks of traveling, meeting hundreds of readers of the Warren monster publications and their pleased parents.

However, with a vested interest in the subject matter, anything encouraging I might say might be considered prejudiced.

That is why I secured an independent candid opinion.

Young folks with problems, here is an article by a young mother which you can show to *your* mother or dad if they're doubters. It is my sincere hope that it will help change the minds of whatever small percent of parents still oppose movie monsters as entertainment for their children.

—FJA.

"Mom & Dad, I want YOU to read this article!" commands Bela Lugosi.

"A 'Monster' known to be constructed in a Hollywood Motion Picture Studio of leather, metal and rubber, is less threatening for children than formless fears."—Dr. Donald P. Wilson, Dirctor of Research & Counseling at the American Institute of Family Relations. (The interplanetary creature from Universal's THIS ISLAND EARTH.)

The story of Peer Gynt, a classic, abounds in fairy tale monsters. Filmed in 1941, top left is close-up of The Great Boyg; top right, The Woman in Green, an aged crone, with her ugly offspring.

I am the mother of 4 children.

My name is Mrs. Terri Pinckard.

We have 3 girls and a boy, ranging in ages from 9 down to 6.

The bookshelves in our home are filled with classical and contemporary literature and among the books are almost every copy of *FAMOUS MONSTERS OF FILMLAND* and *MONSTER WORLD* ever written, goriest covers among those most cherished, read and reread by "The Four"

Do we permit them to read these?

Not only do we *permit* it, we *foster* it, we are *thankful* for their interest.

Hollywood did not invent Monsters. The literature of Man has been full of them. The Loch Ness Monster, The Abominable Snowman, from Hansel and Gretel to the Gnomes in Peer Gynt. Our sacred literature is a strong source, both the Old and New Testaments. The 12th chapter of St. John speaks of the " . . . great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns . . . . . " Hell and Brimstone await those who sin in horrifying descriptions in the New Testament's verse. And the Bible is read in many homes on an evening in front of the fire.

Recently a group of friends gathered in our home for an evening of discussion. Among them was the Editor of *FM*, a psychiatrist, a sociologist and a teacher. The discussion of children, nightmares and horror stories came up. After hearing the discussion, Mr. Ackerman stated he wished it could be reproduced in his magazine to allay the fears some of his readers' parents have expressed and that have been expressed in articles from time to time, wondering what effect, if any, monster stories have on children. I spent several weeks questioning psychologists and mothers and found some very interesting points. Let's take a closer look at the horror story problem.

. . . The screen shows a close-up of a monster's face. It is hideous to behold in green and blue make-up, its antennas waving in the breeze, only

Recognize the star below, on the left? It's *Charlton Heston*—age 17!—in the film version of PEER GYNT (with the music of the famous "Peer Gynt Suite"). The little boy is Charlton's brother! Lower right, a scene from "The Hall of the Mountain Kings", showing trolls, goblins, elves & pixies. This David Bradley Production is now available for *showing in schools!*

"The shadow of Frankenstein haunts the nights of Frank Capra" says the caption on this picture which appeared some years ago in a French magazine. Referring to what, we do not know; but Frank Capra is the world-renowned director of LOST HORIZON and the winner of an Academy Award. In this article, mother Pinckard points out: "How much better to have a child dream of a Frankenstein than of a Buchenwald"—one of Hitler's horrible Concentration Camps of World War 2.

the actual ugliness of it disclosing its fictitious background. The children's eyes are wide, and they scream as the Monster leaps out at the heroine. But in battle after battle, the hero's wonderful human mind conceives of a plan to rid the Earth of the demon. The sun sinks slowly in the west as the Monster sinks slowly in the mire, having been tricked into following the hero's car which turns quickly off at the entrance to the swamp. The children let out their long-held breath, and turn to grin a little at us, saying "Boy, was that close!" On the way home, the children, my husband and myself discuss how well or poorly the make-up job of the monster was done, and how the wooden boots make the "Monster" seem so much taller than a "human".

Will there be nightmares? Probably yes! Isn't this dangerous to give the children monsters for their nightmares to feed on? No! You see, *just* because these nightmares *were* deliberately given to the children for their imagination to feed on, it acheived proportion. They had been prepared at first by fairy tales in their very young age, then by the magazines with all their lore and photographic history to show them how "Monsterism" is achieved through make-up, little miniature models, etc. Through *FM* they were brought contests they might themselves have by making themselves up. Last, because we all accepted the story of these monsters and laughed together at how "scared" we were.

According to *Gesell's Institute of Child Behavior* pocketbook, at " . . . certain ages children have nightmares." Fire, wolves, ghosts, skeletons . . . a 7-year-old is frightened by a thunderstorm or hearing about an earthquake. As a child learns of the outside world, he also learns of REAL-LIFE things to be afraid of. The violence in the South, the murder of our President, these are all things our children cannot be protected from, *must* not be protected from. They must learn to live with them. If they cannot, they cannot live in the real world.

Little failures at school fill the child with doubts, a poor report card fills him, even unnecessarily, with fear; the unknown "stranger" he cannot speak to fills him with an *unknown* fear. Yet, for their mental health, they cannot dwell, neither consciously nor subconsciously, on their everyday life with such fears and emotions. They cannot spend their nights dreaming of their inability to cope with the problems of the day.

Where, then, do these fears take direction? Where can they jell?

Well, we give them a God to put their faith in—can we not give them a Monster to put their fears in? A Monster, one they can accept as made of rubber and make-up . . . they can have nightmares about this, but one part of their mind always retains the knowledge it is all make-believe. A part of them remains reassured or easy to reassure.

The other day our 8-year-old asked what was so very much more terrible about what the Nazis did than any other war. Hating to, we gently, carefully told her just a bit of the knowledge she she had requested. Her eyes grew big with horror, and the tears stung our eyes as she stammered out, "But—but, they did that to *human beings!*" She can never push that horror away with "It

Young folks know monsters are make-believe because they can put on a "boss' mask like this and become the feariest skeeriest "geariest" monster in the Halloween Parade!

was only a story or a movie." She can never forget that that was a part of the REAL world. But she must put it in its place, the *past*. Her fears must be transferred to something a child's brain can cope with.

And so, that night, we watched *Twilight Zone*. For how much better to have her dream of a Frankenstein than of Buchenwald. Yet, in reality, which was the Monster?

Dr. Donald P. Wilson, author of the bestseller "My Six Convicts" and Director of Research & Counseling at the American Institute of Family Relations, sums it up beautifully. He agreed that a tangible source of fear is likely to do less harm to children than intangible ones. In an interview concerning this article, Dr. Wilson said:

"Begging for the present the question of whether the modern 'monsters' are the best means for absorbing the *inherent* fears of children, it certainly seems safe to assume that a 'Monster' known to be constructed in a Hollywood Motion Picture Studio of leather, metal and rubber, is less threatening for children than formless fears. Anxiety is the only really crippling kind of fear and the roots of anxiety are always formless, faceless and without objectified existence.

"It is difficult to see how a 'monster' which is always destroyed before the eyes of the onlooker could cause anxiety of that nature."

He's right, you know! If only all our childrens' Monsters, throughout life, could be destroyed as easily! **END**